



HIMACHAL PRADESH JICA AGRICULTURE PROJECT-II

SPECIAL DIARY

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JICA India Mission explores development of Tea as Matcha industry & agri-entrepreneurship in Kangra Valley



Palampur, June 10, 2026:

JICA India Mission, led by Mr. TAKEUCHI Takuro, Chief Representative, JICA India, visited Palampur on Wednesday to review the progress of the Himachal Pradesh Crop Diversification Promotion Project-II (HPCDP-II) and explore opportunities in tea-based livelihoods, Matcha tea production, agri-processing, value addition, and rural entrepreneurship in Himachal Pradesh. Dr. Sunil Chauhan is leading and coordinating the visit of the Mission along with his team. Other members of the JICA Mission include Mr. KOIDE Sota, Senior Representative; Ms. TAEKO Iwamoto, Representative; and Ms. Nishtha Vengurlekar, Development Specialist, JICA India. This was the second day of the JICA India Mission's visit to HPCDP-II project areas.

Dr. Sunil Chauhan briefed the visiting team on the key achievements of the project and its contribution towards promoting sustainable and market-oriented agriculture across the state. He highlighted the immense potential of Kangra Valley in tea cultivation, value addition, agribusiness development, and the emerging opportunities for commercial Matcha tea production, which could open new avenues of income generation for farmers and entrepreneurs.

The delegation was apprised of ongoing efforts to revive and strengthen the Kangra Tea sector through quality im-

provement, product diversification, adoption of modern processing technologies, and enhanced market linkages. The JICA team appreciated the innovative initiatives being undertaken by local stakeholders to position Kangra Tea, a Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged product, in premium domestic and international markets.

The Mission visited Himalayan Brew Tea Estate, Raipur, where Mr. Rajiv Sud, Founder, Director & CEO, Himalayan Brew Tea Estate, highlighted the estate's initiatives in premium tea production, value addition, branding, export promotion, and the emerging prospects of Matcha tea cultivation and processing in the region. He also shared insights on the growing global demand for specialty teas and the opportunities available for Kangra Tea producers to access high-value domestic and international markets.

The Mission also visited the Palampur Co-operative Tea Factory. During the visit, Mr. Vijay Dhancholia, Manager, along with Mr. Megh Raj Aggarwal, Factory Advisory Officer, Tea Board of India, provided a detailed overview of the factory's functioning, tea procurement and processing systems, quality control measures, branding and marketing initiatives, and the significant contribution of the cooperative model in revitalizing and sustaining the Kangra Tea industry. They also highlighted ongoing efforts to mod-

ernize processing facilities, improve product quality, expand domestic and international market outreach, and enhance returns for tea growers through value-added products and strengthened market linkages.

The Mission further visited Wah Tea Estate, Deogran, where Mr. Deepak Prakash, Owner, Wah Tea Estate, briefed the delegation on the estate's initiatives in tea cultivation, processing, branding, and marketing, as well as its role in promoting high-quality specialty teas and expanding the global footprint of Kangra Tea.

At a meeting held at CSK Himachal Pradesh Agricultural University, Palampur, detailed discussions were held on export opportunities and the potential for scaling up Matcha tea cultivation in Himachal Pradesh. The delegation explored possibilities for adopting advanced production technologies, strengthening value addition, and enhancing market linkages for premium tea products.

Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Deputy Project Director; Dr. V.P. Kaushal, DPM, Palampur; Dr. Ashish Anand and Dr. Rakesh Sharma (SPMU); Dr. Rajnish Sharma, SMS; and Dr. Amit Bhushan, BPM, Palampur, were also present during the visit. PMC Co-Team Leader Er. Anil Agarwal and FPO Expert Er. Sudarshan Suryavanshi were also present during the Mission visit.